

CALIFORNIA EDUCATION CODE SECTIONS 44370-44374

Education Code Section 44370. Legislative Purpose. The Legislature finds and declares that the competence and performance of professional educators depends in part on the quality of their academic and professional preparation. The Legislature recognizes that standards of quality in collegiate preparation complement standards of candidate competence and performance, and that general standards and criteria regarding candidate's competence and performance.

Section 44371. Accreditation System and Framework.

- (a) The system for accreditation of educator preparation shall do all of the following:
- (1) Concentrate on the overall quality of educator preparation in credential programs.
 - (2) Hold professional elementary, secondary, and postsecondary educators responsible for quality in the preparation of professional practitioners.
 - (3) Contribute to improvements in educator preparation and recognize excellence in preparation programs and institutions.
 - (4) Replace the prior system of program approval, as established by the Teacher Preparation and Licensing Act of 1970.
 - (5) Be governed by an Accreditation Framework that sets forth the policies of the Commission on Teacher Credentialing regarding the accreditation of educator preparation.
- (b) The Accreditation Framework shall do all of the following:
- (1) Establish broad, flexible policies and standards for accreditation of educator preparation .
 - (2) Define the accreditation responsibilities, authority, and roles of the Commission on Teacher Credentialing and the Committee on Accreditation.
 - (3) Establish an accreditation system that is efficient and cost-effective.
 - (4) Require that accreditation decisions be based on sufficient reliable evidence about the quality of educator preparation.

Section 44372. Accreditation Responsibilities of the Commission.

The powers and duties of the Commission on Teacher Credentialing regarding the accreditation system shall include the following:

- (a) Adopt and implement an Accreditation Framework, which sets forth the policies of the Commission regarding the accreditation of educator preparation in California.
- (b) Establish and modify credential-specific standards, experimental program standards, and alternative program standards, as defined in the adopted Accreditation Framework.
- (c) Rule on the eligibility of an applicant for accreditation when the applying institution has not previously prepared educators for state certification in California, pursuant to subdivision (a) of Section 44227.

- (d) Appoint and reappoint the members of the Committee on Accreditation, in accordance with Section 44373, by selecting among nominees submitted by a panel of distinguished educators.
- (e) Review periodic accreditation reports by the Committee on Accreditation, and refer accreditation issues and concerns to the Committee for its examination and response.
- (f) Hear and resolve appeals of accreditation decisions, pursuant to subdivision (e) of Section 44374.
- (g) Allocate resources annually for implementation of the accreditation system.
- (h) With the Committee on Accreditation, jointly design an evaluation of accreditation policies and their implementation, and jointly select an external evaluator to conduct the evaluation, in accordance with Section 8 of the Accreditation Framework that was in effect on June 30, 1993.
- (i) Modify the Accreditation Framework in accordance with Section 8 of the Framework that was in effect on June 30, 1993.
- (j) Inform and advise the Legislature regarding statutory issues related to accreditation, and submit legislative recommendations, after considering the advice of the Committee on Accreditation, education institutions and professional organizations.

Education Code Section 44373. Committee on Accreditation.

- (a) There is hereby established the Committee on Accreditation consisting of 12 members selected for their distinguished records of accomplishment in education. Six members shall be from postsecondary education institutions, and six shall be certificated professionals in public schools, school districts, or county offices of education in California. No member shall serve on the Committee as are representative of any organization or institution. Membership shall be, to the maximum extent possible, balanced in terms of ethnicity, gender, and geographic regions. The Committee shall include members from elementary and secondary schools, and members from public and private institutions of postsecondary education.
- (b) The terms of Committee members shall be in accordance with the Accreditation Framework. Appointment of the initial Committee members shall be from nominees submitted by a panel of distinguished educators, who are named by a consensus of the Commission and the Accreditation Advisory Council, pursuant to Section 44371, as that section read on December 31, 1993. Appointment of subsequent Committee members shall be from nominees submitted by a distinguished panel named by a consensus of the Commission and the Committee on Accreditation. For each Committee position to be filled by the Commission, the panel shall submit two highly qualified nominees.
- (c) The Committee shall do, but shall not be limited to doing, all of the following:
 - (1) Make decisions about the accreditation of educators preparation. The Committee's decision making process shall be in accordance with the Accreditation Framework.
 - (2) Make decisions about the initial accreditation of new programs of educator preparation in accordance with procedures established by the Committee.

- (3) Determine the comparability of standards submitted by applicants with those adopted by the Commission, in accordance with the Accreditation Framework.
- (4) Adopt guidelines for accreditation reviews, and monitor the performance of accreditation teams and other aspects of the accreditation system.
- (5) Present an annual accreditation report to the Commission and respond to accreditation issues and concerns referred to the Committee by the Commission.

Section 44374. Accreditation Standards and Procedures.

- (a) The Accreditation Framework shall include common standards that relate to aspects of program quality that are the same for all credential programs. The Framework shall also include multiple options for program standards.
- (b) The Accreditation Framework shall include provisions regarding well-trained accreditation teams whose members shall be drawn from a pool of California college and university faculty members and administrators, elementary and secondary school teachers and other certificated professionals, and local school board members. For each accreditation visit there shall be one team, whose size, composition, and expertise shall be constituted according to the Accreditation Framework.
- (c) An accreditation team shall present its report and recommendations to the Committee on Accreditation in accordance with the Accreditation Framework. The Committee shall consider the accreditation team report and recommendations, and shall also consider evidence, which may be submitted by the institution, that the team demonstrated bias or acted arbitrarily or capriciously or contrary to the policies of the Accreditation Framework or the procedural guidelines of the Committee.
- (d) The Committee on Accreditation shall make a single decision to accredit, to accredit with stipulations, or to deny accreditation to an institution's credential programs, pursuant to Section 44373 and the Accreditation Framework.
- (e) An institution has the right to appeal to the Commission if the procedures or decisions of an accreditation team or the Committee on Accreditation are arbitrary, capricious, unfair, or contrary to the policies of the Commission or the procedural guidelines of the Committee. An institution also has the right to recommend changes in the accreditation policies of the Commission, which shall be considered by the Commission in consultation with the Executive Director and the Committee on Accreditation.
- (f) At the request of an institution, the accreditation of an education unit or a specific program by a national accrediting body shall substitute for state accreditation provided that the national accrediting body has satisfied the applicable conditions set forth in the Accreditation Framework.